

THE SINS OF THE FATHERS



"The smoke from her mother's pistol seemed to stretch out through the years, full of cruel, hostile eyes and ever forming itself into a baffling band that beat her always back from success."

How the Old Biblical Law Worked Out for Lorraine Hollis, (Beauty, Actress and Playwright), Whose Shadowed Life Has Been Ended by Starvation in the Very Heart of Rich New York

THE daughter is dead—starved to death in a New York furnished room. The mother lives, on the opposite side of the continent, though she tried to die by her own hand at the moment when the news of her daughter's death reached her.

The father died years ago, by the mother's hand—because he would not divorce his wife and bestow his honored name upon this mother and this daughter.

Thus, now for the first time, is explained the mystery of the always losing battle which wore out the life of one of the most beautiful and estimable women who ever graced the American stage—Lorraine Hollis. Always, upon her spirits and upon the material circumstances of her daily existence, rested the blight of the Scriptural promise: "The sins of the fathers shall be visited upon their children, even unto the third and fourth generation."

Yet, borne up by her sense of her own personal freedom from responsibility for the misdeeds of her parents, she kept up her fight to the end. Her great beauty and talents could not be denied. Lenbach, the great German court painter, declared she resembled Maxine Elliott, his ideal of a beautiful woman. This beauty, and her ability as an actress, enabled her to earn the attention of a man influential in the theatrical world—and for once, a few years before the war, there was a single moment in which she seemed to have triumphed. She had been happily received by him. No other person

present. "You shall have the position to which you are to do," he said, "in five years—your beauty and your talents entitle you to it. The contract will be for five years—telling all the burden of her embittered smiling from her wearied body. But the touch of her fate was leaning over, his face touching hers, muttering something seemed incredible.

"What is that?" she asked, startled. "What you are to do," he said, "in five years—what I am to see is done for you." In lower tones, he repeated the contract which had seemed incredible. "There was no mistaking the man's meaning. She blazed forth in her indignation, and rose to quit the place. He laughed loudly, sneering:

"You? You, the nameless daughter of a poor man and Judge Crittenden? Born and reared by a murderer! Oh, what a nice, precious little innocent! Good-bye, busy."

Because of the murder of Judge Crittenden, while he was on a ferryboat from San Francisco to Oakland, his wife, returning after a long absence from the East, was written into the records and a fresh page turned in the life of the vivid crimes of a vivid

Laura Fair's baby," precocious by and by the candor of the hirelings surrounded her in her first three years, understood. The story was told in her hearing.

Fair had been content with the making of the jurist. She had been content with his admiration, been en-

riched by his generosity. But when she learned that his wife was returning from her protracted visit in the East, the flame of jealousy blazed in her breast. She begged Judge Crittenden to leave his home before his wife returned. He smiled at what he termed her childishness. She implored him to offer his wife a divorce. He explained to her what restrictions of apparent convention hedge around a man of his eminence and his ambitions. She knelt to him. He grew impatient. She rose and shot him.

A crowd gathered about her. She was hurried off to jail. A mob threatened to try lynching. On the mind of the sensitive child were indelible photographs of the ignominious events. When her mother returned, the child turned her cheek from her kisses. One who saw the reunion said the child's eyes were the largest and saddest she had ever seen.

"They are the eyes of tragedy. She will look always upon grief," said a woman who knew sorrow, and whose body was afterwards found floating in San Francisco Bay.

Laura Fair set up a little home in the Mission. She hired a new nurse and the new nurse supplied all the facts the old ones had overlooked in the grim story of her mother's life; while the woman, still young and beautiful, and desperate, was earning her livelihood and her child's by singing in the dance halls of the mining camps.

And the child grew up. Often she said to the friends of that time that she wished she had not. With tastes superior to her environment, with a spirit acutely sensitive, she suffered keenly from the little hurts of life and dreaded the greater ones. And always over her lay the shadow of the memories of her babyhood, a shadow thick, black, impenetrable.

She went upon the stage and her beauty won her a local fame. Pacific Coast theatregoers recall her Parthenia, her Camille, her Frou-Frou, her Stephanie in "Forget-Me-Not," and her Marina in "Mr. Barnes of New York." She joined William H. Crane's company and she played in Augustin Daly's company. She wrote dramas and melodramas—"The Panther's Trail," "A Heart of Stone"—she said the title was what the world seemed to her—and "A Woman Pays." She had thought, she said, of giving the last title, "The Daughter Pays."

But for Lorraine Hollis success was brief. For a time she starred, but her tours were short. More money to carry her through the one-night stands and make good the deficits by bad business, more influence to "boom" the new-risen star, for the stage is, in this respect, much like real estate, where what she needed. They were offered her for the price often exacted in that sphere of glittering temptations, the stage. But she could not bring herself to pay that price.

From the day of the scene with the man of influence above described, her fight became a hopeless one. Lorraine Hollis was "blacklisted." Managers received her indifferently or not at all. They had nothing for her. They would never have anything for her.

Maxine Elliott's beauty shone more radiantly for its brilliant setting. Lorraine

Hollis's, much resembling it, was dulled by its grim and gloomy surroundings. Latterly she was known as "The Lonely Lady." Always those who knew her story called her "The Child of Tragedy."

She was a woman of tenderest sympathies. Once she held an audience waiting an hour while she rescued a horse that was being beaten and kicked by its driver.

"Four-footed beasts have always been my friends, but I detest two-legged ones," she said, as, arriving so late, she made her smiling trembling apology and explanation to her audience.

Into her humble last home she gathered walf dogs and lost cats. Tom, a gray-striped mascot, she carried with her to the theatre always.

For children she had the love of motherhood denied. She would stop in the street before a perambulator and look with hungry, tear-wet eyes at the rosy face beneath the canopy of lace.

Lorraine Hollis's health failed rapidly under the strain. She grew too weak to go about. She scribbled a little every day, but hopelessly. She sat often with her head in her hands, four walf cats mewing piteously or angrily about her. She looked often at the portrait of a beautiful woman, but she never spoke of her. Sometimes she said: "I will never escape it! It will be with me to the end!"

At forty-two, Laura Fair's daughter was a broken woman, an admitted failure, for the shadow wrapped her thickly around.

Many others had said that to her, and Laura Fair's daughter had begun to hate all men and to care for few women. Her heart remained tender to children and animals, to the stricken and hopeless. She looked oftener than ever at the portrait of her mother, of whom she never spoke. Round the figure of the beautiful woman she saw a shadow, broad and black and suffocating. It was crushing her life.

They found her on a February morning in the cold, dark room, her face lovely with the beauty of a fading flower. The news sped to the woman in San Francisco. Laura Fair screamed and raged at fate. Those who saw her recalled the tigress woman of forty-two years before who had slain the father of her child, who had been condemned to the scaffold and had been finally permitted to live and suffer the prolonged penalty of a life filled with regrets.

She tried to end her life. Failing, she said: "Can God be so cruel as to visit the sins of the mother upon the daughter? I cannot believe it." But the dead woman knew.



Lorraine Hollis When She Was Twenty-one.



A Rare Photograph from a Portrait of Mrs. Laura D. Fair, the Mother of Lorraine Hollis, Painted Just Before She Killed Judge Crittenden, Whom She Accused of Being the Father of the Unfortunate Girl.

It was no casual coincidence that these events occurred in the same week. They held to each other the relation of cause and effect. The woman who died was the daughter of the woman who tried to die. Out of the black past had stalked a spectre that beckoned both to death. The sin of the mother was visited upon the daughter. By the law of reaction the grief of the daughter was visited upon the mother. The daughter dying because of the mother, the mother had tried to die because of the daughter. Across the continent sped a story of love, of vengeance, of the suffering and sacrifice of the innocent, of retribution.

The story is one that shows how stronger than environment may, in some instances, be heredity, for by every external sign Lorraine Hollis had a brilliant prospect for success. She had beauty so unusual that in a newspaper contest she won the title of the most beautiful woman in California, a State of beautiful women. She had an irresistible charm. "Every time she smiles she makes a friend," said one of her suitors, a discarded one, for as the shadow of her tragedy closed around her, the beauty became a man hater. She had a brilliant mind and worked with a vast energy that kept her at work until the day before her death. Even while the shadow under which she was born settled forever upon her, never to lift a passerby saw the thin, pale, still lovely profile silhouetted against the window, and bent above a writing pad, while her hands, thin nearly to transparency, tremblingly guided a pencil. But the memory of the crime was stronger than she. In its shadow she died.



A Photograph of Lorraine Hollis When Trying for Success Upon the Stage.

Women Growing Manly and Men "Lady-like"

At this moment, when the English Suffragettes are making extra exertions to carry out their threat to "make London uninhabitable," the contrast between these Amazons and the lady-like youth of the British Metropolis, has evoked much newspaper comment. Of the latter the Daily Sketch says:

There is a type of man that every real man wants to kick. It—one cannot use the masculine pronoun—is to be found chiefly in the neighborhood of Bond street, either coming out of a hairdresser's establishment or getting into a taxi-cab.

It seldom walks because its leg muscles are barely strong enough to bear the weight of its frail body, but it can stand at a bar for fairly long periods if its weight be supported by a cane and the rail of the bar.

Straight drinks are too strong for its delicate constitution, so it ruins what little health there is within it by imbibing the sort of drinks they sell to women in the cafes.

Its greatest desire in life is not to look like a man, and in this it is entirely successful. It possesses neither vigor nor brains, and compared with the "nut" it is an empty shell.

You may recognize it by many signs. Its head is anointed with violet-scented oil; its body is encased in corsets, and its feet in tight shoes with high heels. It wears a shirt of a material more suitable for a woman's blouse, and it tells the time of day by a woman's wristlet watch.

It has to be born of wealthy parents, because it cannot work for

a living. The world has no use for it, but its money is an asset to West End tradesmen.

The Daily Sketch inquired into some of its habits. A tailor said an invariable sign of effeminacy, so far as his trade was concerned, was a desire for trimmings. Where a real man would have plain braid the effeminate ordered a little embroidery. One customer had a large cloth-covered button, similar to those on women's ulsters, where the ordinary man would have two plain bone buttons. The effeminate note in his overcoat was achieved by exaggerated skirts and a compressed waist.

But the real hall-marks of the empty shell are to be found in its night attire and toilet accessories. It sleeps in a silk nightgown or gorgeous pyjamas of the same material, wears silk slippers in the bedroom, and crimps its hair with silver-mounted curling tongs.

Often it has not sufficient energy to make its toilet all at once, and it trips into a taxi-cab to be finished off in Bond street. Here its face is covered with hot towels and afterwards massaged with scented creams. At the door of such an establishment you may see it holding up a stick for a taxi-cab.

A cigarette trembles from its weak mouth, and its small brow is puckered in an attempt to solve the great problem of the day—what shall be the aperitif, and where shall it be taken?

To the observer the greatest problem the empty shell presents is: What would happen to it if it lost the support of its stick?